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ADMINISTRATIVE-INTERNAL USE ONLY

EDITING WORKSHOP

This workshop will focus on techniques for revising written work with emphasis on improving organization of ideas, sentence structure, and word usage. Sessions will include group editing of typical written work. We ask participants to submit several items of unedited writing for use in these sessions.

DESIGNED FOR

Those who edit or supervise other's written material, in addition to their own.

FIRST OFFERING

2 days Spring 1985

ID#406

ADMINISTRATIVE-INTERNAL USE ONLY

EDITING WORKSHOP OUTLINE

NOTE: This outline suggests a generalized approach to editing. It will be tailored to the needs of the audience as determined by the precourse meeting.

DAY 1

Presentation of Objectives

- To promote clear and concise written communication
- To guarantee accuracy
- To recognize and eliminate errors in structure, usage, and organization
- To promote general principles of effective editing

"Structural Faults"

Five most common structural faults

- Squinting modifiers
- Loose or run-on sentences
- Faulty pronoun references
- Dangling modifiers
- Faulty parallel patterns

"Usage"

- The choices: When do we use "altogether" rather than "all together," "between" rather than "among," and so forth?
- The uses of words that sound alike but are spelled differently.
- The uses of prepositional idioms
- Other usage patterns

"Tips and Checklist for Editing"

- Transition for paragraphs
- Sentence Problems
 - * Check for complete sentence
 - * Use of active voice, rather than the passive
 - * Avoiding "There is" and "it is" construction
 - * Check for run-on sentences
 - * Check for separated subject and broken verbs
 - * Check for split infinitives
 - * Use of strong verbs
 - * Weak wordy construction
 - * Pruning wordy construction

Organization of Ideas

Practical exercises using submitted items

Discussion: "Some General Principles of Editing"

- Know your role; that is, do not make changes you are not authorized to make
- Keep in mind the intent of the author
- If you do not know the intent of the author, check with the author
- Watch for--
 - * Contradictions
 - * Vague generalizations
 - * Questionable assumptions.
- Examine the organization
- Scrutinize the language: Are the sentences logical, clear, economical, and structurally correct?

DAY 2

Practical exercises applying the principles of effective editing using submitted items

Workshop evaluation

Concluding comments from the instructor

ADMINISTRATIVE-INTERNAL USE ONLY

ADVANCED WRITING

This workshop will focus on the needs of Agency writers to identify audience, organize material for a specific audience, and revise to meet the needs of that audience.

The workshop will develop strategies for composing memoranda, letters, reports, and papers; and will integrate the writing processes of prewriting, writing, editing, and revising.

DESIGNED FOR

Agency writers who do not need nor want a review of basic composition techniques, but who need to develop skills of organization, focus, and revision to improve their memoranda, letters, and reports.

FIRST OFFERING

3 half-days for two consecutive weeks Spring of 1985

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COURSE OUTLINE FOR ADVANCED WRITING

All of us who write as a part of our job should consider ourselves professional writers. Like professional writers, we must

- *know the audience

- *identify the essential idea

- *organize the material to inform and appeal to the audience

- *revise and edit to meet the specific needs of the audience

I. The Audience: Our Readers

- A. As writers, we should visualize not only our primary audience but anyone who might judge or be informed by our message.
- B. We must consider what our audience already knows about our subject and how that knowledge might affect tone, organization of material, and the information we need to include.
- C. We need to know how our information will affect our audience: does the message pose a threat?
- D. We need to know how the audience views the writer: Is the writer an expert or must the writer establish credibility through the message?
- E. We should assess the specific needs of the audience and structure our message to reduce their anxiety.

II. The Essential Idea: What the Reader Must Know

- A. As writers, we need to determine the single most important idea of our message.
- B. Any information that obscures or detracts from the central point belongs in a separate paper.
- C. Any information that competes with the central point belongs either in a separate paper or in a position of lesser prominence in the paper.
- D. We need to decide what action we want the reader to take and to be certain that our message suggests that action.

III. Organization

- A. Organization of material is a part of the writer's strategy.
- B. We must decide whether we are primarily interested in persuading, informing, requesting information, directing action, or reporting on action taken.
- C. We must consider our position in the hierarchy and the position of all members of the audience.
- D. We must address the needs of the audience in our organization of material.
- E. Most memos, reports, and analytical writing should present the recommendations and conclusion first to save the reader time.
- F. Reports or memos which are controversial should lead the reader to believe in the justness of the writer's cause or the inevitability of his position. The reader is more likely to be persuaded if he does not confront the conclusion first.
- G. Letters, like memos and reports, have an explicit purpose.
- H. The organization of material in a letter is a tactical decision and reflects the writer's view of the perceived needs of the reader.

IV. Revision

- A. Writers revise to achieve brevity, coherence, and unity.
- B. Writers revise to provide emphasis.
- C. Writers revise to correct tone.
- E. Writers revise in order to be understood: to report accurately, to provide analysis, and to bring about action.
- F. Revision of one's own work is a necessary part of the composing process.
- G. Submitting one's work for revision is a necessary part of the communication process.
- H. Revising the work of others is a necessary part of the editorial process.
- I. Revision is the writer's opportunity to test his strategy, improve his coherence, and restructure to meet the needs of the reader.

Administrative - Internal Use Only

TECHNICAL WRITING WORKSHOP

This workshop will focus on the structure, wording, and format of technical documents to include:

- * proposals
- * reports
- * procedures
- * manuals
- * letters
- * articles.

Emphasis will be on the accurate transmission of technical information.

DESIGNED FOR

Managers, scientists, engineers, and technicians faced with special problems in communicating complex technical information to technical and non-technical readers.

FIRST OFFERING

23, 24, and 25 July 1985

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GETTING STARTED

Differences among
official writing
school writing
creative writing

Advantages of
writing
phoning
visiting

Inhibiting factors
fear of blundering
complexity of topics
need for precision
habit and laziness
the boss

Damaging myths about
genius
inspiration
correctness

Your attitudes toward
this course
your writing

PLANNING TO WRITE

How to adjust for
audience
purpose
occasion

Choosing the format
letter
memorandum
message
report
directive

Saving time by
getting clear instructions
using outline trees
making the false start

ORGANIZATION

Strategies for desired action

- request-support
- answer-explanation
- problem-solution
- chronology
- order of importance
- summaries
- good and bad news

Paragraphs

- topic sentences
- length
- development

Sentences

- subordination and coordination
- periodic and loose
- placement
- length

Relating ideas by

- transitions
- repetition
- synonyms
- pronouns

Parallelism in

- paragraphs
- sentences
- words

Graphic aids

- lists
- headings
- underlining
- white space

CLARITY

Pronouns

- "I" or "we"?
- the "you" attitude
- occasions for impersonality

Words that prevent

- vagueness
- pomposity
- legalistic lingo

TONE

Looking for
mutual interests
positive language
safe connotations

Consistency
personal vs. impersonal
informal vs. formal

VIGOR

Verbs
active
specific
near subject

Sentence variety
length
structure
beginnings

Emphasis
pacing
position
part of speech

Varied punctuation
colons
semicolons
dashes
parentheses
question marks

ECONOMY

Needless information
long-winded introductions
obvious or excessive detail

Needless words
"who," "which," "that" clauses
diluted verbs
doublings

False economy
noun strings
misused acronyms

MECHANICS

Grammar

- subject-verb agreement
- pronoun-antecedent agreement
- misplaced modifiers

Punctuation

- commas
- hyphens
- capitalization

ARGUING WELL

One model

- getting attention
- describing the problem
- visualizing the results
- requesting action or approval

Appeals to

- efficiency
- loyalty
- authority
- pride
- generosity

Winning tactics

- separating fact from opinion
- isolating causes and effects
- acknowledging the opposition
- looking for common ground

TECHNICAL WRITING

Choosing the format

Arranging the sections

Creating interest

Balancing detail and readability

Using visuals

Dealing with mixed audiences

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DEVELOPING WRITING CONFIDENCE

This course will enable participants to become aware of the sources of stress in writing, both historical and individual, to recognize and understand the signs of writing stress, and to develop strategies to gain confidence in writing.

This course will consist of a series of three workshops which, among other things, will focus on: (1) signs of writing stress: procrastination, missing deadlines, solitary work habits, little or no revision, uncondusive writing environment, poor communication with superiors or subordinates about writing tasks, writing blocks, and insufficient planning. (2) strategies to gain writing confidence. (3) understanding the causes of writing stress and developing a disciplined approach to writing tasks.

DESIGNED FOR

Agency employees who want to become more confident and more effective in their approach to writing.

FIRST OFFERING

3 days Spring 1985

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BRIEFING TECHNIQUES FOR PROFESSIONAL PLATFORM DELIVERY

This workshop will focus on the delivery aspects of briefing and emphasizes skills, behaviors, and techniques for effective, professional platform performance.

Topics, discussions, and exercises focus on developing briefer awareness, sensitivity, and skill in three primary delivery areas: (1) nonverbal communication, (2) use of language, and (3) vocal capability. Armed with good preparation, well-organized material, and sound ideas, participants will learn techniques and behaviors which will make them masterful briefers.

Additional areas for consideration and skill practice include:

- * body movement, language, and mannerisms
- * managing tension/nervousness before and during delivery
- * using presentation tools: body, lectern, visual aids

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- * behavioral strategies for successful persuasion
- * receiving, understanding, and adapting to audience feedback
- * handling "difficult" and "hostile" questions and audiences

DESIGNED FOR

Agency Middle- and Senior-Level Managers and Analysts who have significant briefing responsibilities and experience in briefing. This workshop is designed to impart skills beyond those addressed in the currently offered Briefing Techniques Course.

FIRST OFFERING

3 days Spring 1985

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